WINCHESTER NEWS
A TRUSTED AND RELIABLE SOURCE OF LOCAL NEWS

Donate

DONATE | NEWS | SPORTS | EVENTS | FEATURES | OPINION | NEWSLETTER | CONTACT | ABOUT

NEWS

Competency plan approved for Winchester High School seniors

CHRIS STEVENS | CORRESPONDENT

February 24, 2025 . 6:00 AM — 2 min read

Winchester High School now has a plan in place to meet competency requirements by the district and state to graduate. WINCHESTER NEWS FILE PHOTO

A competency requirement plan is now in place for those few st
caught between the end of MCAS era and a pending graduation.

Subscribe

“It’s obviously a little bit of an odd situation, because we’re already in February, and graduation is coming up in June,” said School Committee member Tim Matthews, speaking to the urgency of the issue.

Winchester High School students need to meet two goals to graduate: pass a local requirement and meet a competency determination. In November, however, voters overwhelmingly answered yes to a ballot question that ended a state mandate requiring 10th graders to pass MCAS in order to graduate.

The move came with consequences for those students who have yet to pass the MCAS, but are scheduled to graduate this year.

Assistant Superintendent Jennifer Elineema recently presented the School Committee with an option for the students in graduation limbo.

She said Competency Determination would be awarded to students who complete the following courses with a passing grade:

• English, grades 9 and 10

• STAG 9 and STAG 10 mathematics (statistics, trigonometry, algebra and geometry) or equivalent for students transferring in from other districts

• At least one of the following — introductory (or higher) courses in physics, biology or chemistry

Donate today!

The district will also accept equivalent coursework completed at prior schools as long as it’s in line with Winchester’s practices for credi and course alignment, according to the presentation.

Subscribe

"We also just wanted to be very clear, this does not pertain to any senior who either passed the MCAS or passed any of the retest up until November, because the new law took effect in January," said Elineema. "So anyone who already passed, this does not apply to them, this is simply for those students who need to meet a competency determination before this June."

It also only applies to 2025 graduates.

Elineema said since the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is signaling that more guidelines regarding competency will be forthcoming, it makes sense to simply focus on the Class of 2025 for now.

School Committee member Tom Hopcroft asked Elineema if she could ballpark how many students would be impacted

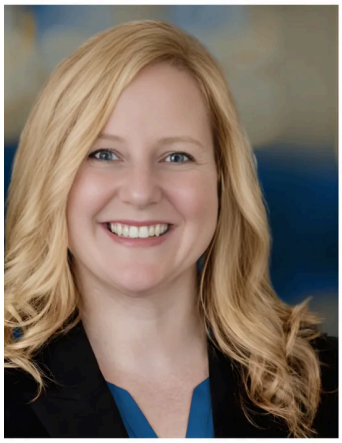
"We're in the single digits," she said. "I recognize how fortunate we are. Many districts are really grappling with this as it's a much bigger number of students and how to solve this."

Matthews agreed the new competency determination was in all likelihood an "interim waypoint on our journey to getting to something more final." But he added, "I thought it was a good waypoint for us to be at."

Winchester News is a non-profit organization supported by our community. If you appreciate having local Winchester news, please donate to support our work, and subscribe to our free weekly newsletter.

Related

Subscribe



NEWS

Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting backgrounds to Thursday forum

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

WILL DOWD | STAFF WRITER
March 4, 2026

NEWS

Rep. Michael Day helps House colleagues pass sweeping energy affordability bill

The following was submitted by the Office of Rep. Michael S. Day: Rep. Michael S. Day and his colleagues in the House of Representatives recently passed energy affordability legislation that would result in over $9 billion in savings for utility ratepayers over the next 10 years. The bill maintains critical

March 4, 2026

NEWS

Winchester gun owners face new training rules starting April 2

Public safety data How Winchester compares on firearms licenses in comparable Massachusetts communities Active licenses

NEWS

Sen. Jason Lewis, Mass. Senate strengthen fair housing protections for rente

The following was submitted by the Office of Sen. Jason Lewis: State Sen. Jason Lewis

Subscribe

as of Jan. 25, 2025 — Source: Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board License to carry firearms Firearms identification card Winchester and Marblehead are the focus communities. Peers selected based on comparable population size, demographics and suburban

WILL DOWD | STAFF WRITER

March 4, 2026

joined his colleagues in the Massachusetts Senate to pass legislation that protects residents from discrimination in the housing market as the Trump administration abandons its enforcement of the federal Fair Housing Act. Illegal discrimination continues

March 3, 2026

Latest

PROMOTING HEALTH & EMPOWERMENT
HEAR FROM HIGH SCHOOL LEADERS
LEARN THROUGH INTERACTIVE GAMES
MEET NEW PEOPLE
FREE AND OPEN TO THE COMMUNITY
Middle school & high school students, teachers, parents, friends, community members - come and bring a friend!
FOR MORE INFORMATION:
EMAIL OFFICE@NFSJ.ORG
CALL 781-729-7100
NETWORK for SOCIAL JUSTICE
FROM WINCHESTER AND CHELSEA
GIRL UP
WOMEN IN STEM
GIRLS GOTTA RUN
MIND & MATTER

EVENTS

Celebrate Women's History Month with Girls Leading Change

The following was submitted by the Network for Social Justice: To mark Women's History Month and International Women's Day in 2026, the Network for Social Justice is collaborating with club leaders from Winchester High School and members of the Community Health team from La Colaborativa in Chelsea and

March 4, 2026

NEWS

Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting backgrounds to Thursday forum

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

WILL DOWD | STAFF WRITER

March 4, 2026

Subscribe

FEATURES

‘Chicago: Teen Edition’ dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents “Chicago: Teen Edition,” a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. Set in the 1920s, this iconic production is sure to leave the audience wanting more. Performances will

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS
March 4, 2026

EVENTS

Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents ‘Syldason: You Are Welcome Here’

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

March 4, 2026

WINCHESTER NEWS
A TRUSTED AND RELIABLE SOURCE OF LOCAL NEWS

Subscribe to Winchester News

Subscribe

© 2026 Winchester News Group, Inc. Copying and sharing with permission for non-commercial use only.

Subscribe